

An Essay

On
Inflammation and Ulceration
of the Uterus and its Cervix

Respectfully Submitted.

To the Faculty

of the
Homoeopathic Medical College
of Pennsylvania

By
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11. Inflammation and ulcer-
ation of the Uterus and
its Cervix

To comply with the laws of
this honorable Institution, I must overcome
the consciousness of my deficiency in treating
any subject on the boundless science of medi-
cine and must conceive ideas and thoughts
which my limited talents and acquirements
shall be, but barely, able to depict. Relying
however, on the discretion and allowance of
our respectable Faculty, I will with the inspi-
ration of the moment and without despondency
exhibit to them a few elements of medical
science gathered under their care and instruc-
tion.

After my primary studies in the

public schools and Gymnasii in Italy, changes in the political world have caused me to abandon studies, home and country. Since then I have wandered over land and sea and have struggled in the battles of life as in those of patriotism, till, at length, I came to rest on the hospitable shores of this happy land. It is here in America where I conceived the idea of pursuing the noble career of medicine, a profession which affords the consolation and the gratification of devoting oneself to the welfare and happiness of humanity.

I spent several months in the inquiry of the different schools and methods, and to say the truth, the more I read and studied the more my mind became unsettled. Thanks, however, to practice and to the antagonists of Homoeopathy. From the former I learnt,

that, although philosophers cannot always
account for the virtue and uncontested action
of homoeopathic treatment, still facts over facts,
cases over cases overcome hypothesis and doubt
and give to the practitioner that faith, which
becomes from that time the guide in his studies
and in the success of his profession. From
the latter I learnt that their opposition is
the result of fear and panic for the prospect
of their interests, of envy of the success of the
young school, and consequently of want of
liberality in acknowledging the superiority
of the new system and the existence of an
incontrovertible law of cure. Old age has also
nobilitated the allopathic school, to which
many a bright mind and wonderful talent
have offered their devotion and are affectionate-
ly attached to her, for having consecrated

to her the dreams of their youth and the exertions of their life!

I ask pardon for this digression, which is rather unconnected with the subject I am to treat; but I offer it to our honourable Faculty as an expression of my true belief in the homoeopathic law and of my earnest devotion to the medical profession.

My subject, which is a difficult and interesting one, in Pathology and Therapeutics is the "Inflammation and Ulceration of the cervix and mucous membrane of the Uterus."

The Uterus, the cradle of embryonic life of human species, is the seat of most troublesome and dangerous diseases among females. When we think that the lining mucous mem-

brane of the uterus and its cervix, particularly, are so vascular and subject to a periodical congestion for the secretion and excretion of the menstrual flux, which a slight cold can arrest or modify; that it is so much exposed to automatic and mechanical injuries, we can easily conceive its liability to inflammation, ulceration and other diseases.

General inflammation of the uterus, or Metritis is not a very common disease, for the peculiar muscular, non cellular structure of its body is not very susceptible to inflammation, except when it has undergone the wonderful changes occurring in pregnancy.

Still, the plethoric temperament is a predisposing cause of Metritis. And arrested menstruation, sexual excess and the extension of chronic inflammation from the neck of the

organ may contribute greatly and even cause the inflammation in question.

On account of the presence of cellular tissue in the Cervix of the Uterus and of its greater vascularity, inflammation of this part occurs more frequently and is a common disease among females of all classes, all ages, all stations of life. The virgin as well as the married female, is subject to it.

Menstruation in its varieties and abnormalities, causing congestion and enlargement of the part and vessels, seems to be the predisposing cause of inflammation of the Cervix Uteri in the Virgin. Married females, besides the above predisposing cause, are liable to injuries as in congress, pregnancy, labor, abortion which render the Uterus very sensitive and prone to inflammation and ulceration at the slightest degree of dissipation

or indulgence in sexual intercourse.

Besides these, there are other anatomical causes, prominent among which are the displacements of the uterus, which expose it to abnormal irritations.

Inflammation of the os or cervix is found to offer a vivid red tinge instead of the pale, rosy colour of health; often it is dotted with florid purple or white pustulae containing muco-pus which is secreted all over the surface. This secretion is a clear diagnostic sign of ulceration and distinguishes it from inflammation resulting from congestion. The enlargement of the cervical passage is another anatomical sign which is always present and conduces greatly to the recognition of this malady.

An inflammation of the cervix uteri of long standing is generally followed by the ulcerative process.

Ulceration appears first around the os and just within the cavity of the cervix. The presence of ulceration gives, generally, to the surface on which it exists, a soft velvety character, which the finger may easily recognize. The part is also congested and hypertrophied.

Whenever the ulceration is within the cavity of the Uterus and the finger cannot get a proper appreciation of the existence of aphthæ or granulations, the open state of the os should be considered of sufficient importance to indicate the presence of ulceration of the lining mucous membrane of the Uterus; an instrumental examina=

tion will, however, be absolutely necessary. The nature of the excretion will also serve much to the diagnosis.

The pus, often confounded with Leucorrhoea, may be thick, of a yellow-earthly color, or it may be thin and sanious according to the state of ulceration; it may be scanty or in great abundance. Whenever the disease is merely inflammatory, the excretions are partly mucous, not entirely purulent. If unmixed pus is discharged it may be considered a gonorrhoeal inflammation. Another evidence of ulceration is the discharge of blood caused by pressure or injury in coitus, pregnancy, abortion and confinement. The blood is of an arterial character and sometimes flows freely.

Local pains do not, generally, attend ulceration of the cervix; but in inflammation the sympathetic pains in the ovaries, in the lumbar and sacral regions, and the sensation of pelvic weight and bearing down are always present. The pains are not severe, but of a dull aching character, often expressed by the patient with the term "weakness". These pains, however, are, in some individuals of an agonising character disabling oftentimes the patient from any sort of exertion and causing her to draw a weary life of confinement to the bed or couch. The pains may come on in paroxysms, and are then often confounded with neuralgia of the uterus.

This disease has a tendency to impair

the digestive apparatus. Owing to the weakened and morbid condition of the stomach, the chyle is imperfectly elaborated and is unfit for assimilation and nutrition. It is for this reason that the urine is charged with lithates and urate of ammonia, phosphates and oxalate of lime.

The functions of the Kidneys is also often impaired through the sympathetic system of nerves by the overaction inflicted upon them in the purification of the blood overcharged with deleterious substances. This condition of the Kidneys represents, therefore, a prominent feature in the history of the case, the patient being ~~now~~ seized with severe bilious attacks. Thus pain in the side, severe headaches, nausea, vomiting and dyspepsia are

symptoms attending the disease.

Perspiration is sometimes impaired through the pneumogastric nerve. Thoracic pains and dyspnoea are therefore present.

The sympathetic nerves corresponding with the brain cause also such cerebral symptoms as headache, depression of spirit, impairment of the hearing, pain at the slightest contact with the muscles of the Skull, unpleasant dreams, nightmare, &c. &c.

In making our diagnosis, however, we cannot be satisfied with the several symptoms already enumerated. Errors might be committed, for it does not always follow that all those symptoms are present; and some of them may be

present in a morbidly of an entirely different character. To remove all doubts and relieve our mind from suspense and anxiety we must have recourse to a digital examination, overcoming with professional authority, but gentlemanly, those delicacies which in women constitute a very great obstacle. If we find tenderness of the part, congestion, abrasion which may be easily discovered with the speculum, a smooth velvety surface, ulcers discharging blood or purulent matter on pressure or even touch, and some of the external symptoms are present we should have no hesitation in pronouncing it a case of inflammatory ulceration of the cervix of the Uterus.

This disease is not in itself a fatal one. It generally yields to a careful hygienic

treatment and to studied and rational medical prescriptions. Still, inflammatory ulceration of the uterine neck may cause such debility, coupled with so much pain and irritation that the patient, after having drawn a life of perfect misery, may sink under their deadly influence.

The most dangerous part of the disease is that it may reduce the system so much that any dormant cachexia may be called into action and expose the patient to such diseases as hectic fever, pneumonia, phthisis &c.

The tendency of this disease is to remain unchangeable. Our therapeutics, however, seem to be very successful in curing it.

Our chief remedies are Puls. Sep. Nux.v.
Sulph. Ignatia. Conth. Ars. Merc. Plat. Aron.
Ses. vi. But Nat. carb. Bell. Kali, carb. Iodine.
Graph. Arg. n. Calc. Fer. form a group of useful
remedies in the different conditions
of the malady.

Local treatment as Nitrate of Silver, in infla-
-mation and congestion has been resorted to.
The douches ascendantes, have also been used as
adjuvants, as it cleanses the parts and gives
a shock to the uterus.

Finis coronat opus.

Julio Pizarra Verde

